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Lesson Plan: Oral History (grades 6-8)

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Lesson Plan

Course/Grade Level:

- Humanities/ Grade 8

Topic/Title:

- Students will demonstrate comprehension of the concept of oral history by conducting an oral history interview, summarizing and transcribing their interviews, writing reflections of their experiences, and presenting their oral history project work to class.

Historical Time Period(s):

- Contemporary America (1945-present)

Thematic Question:

1. What is the past, and why is it important?
2. How do we learn about events in the past?
3. How are historical accounts influenced by the biases of eyewitnesses?

Standards/Benchmarks/Indicators:

- Common Core: English Language Arts- Writing

8, 2d: Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.

8, 6: Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and ideas efficiently as well as sources as to interact and collaborate with others.
- Common Core: English Language Arts- Speaking and Listening

8, 1: Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on Grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
- Common Core: English Language Arts- Language

8, 1: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
- Focus Skills: analysis; critical thinking; gathering, classifying and interpreting written, oral and visual information
- Historical analysis, interpretation, interview/survey skills

- Literary analysis: making inferences and drawing conclusions
- Synthesis

Materials/Resources:

1. ipads
2. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/walk/memory1.shtml>
3. <http://edsitement.neh.gov>
4. classroom interview sheet
5. Movie maker or video equivalent app
6. http://dohistory.org/on_your_own/toolkit/oralHistory.html
7. Oral History Reminder List and How do I ask questions

Motivation (Attention Grabber):

- The work of an historian is to gather information from many places, including primary sources, and to create an official written account. Students will look a YouTube video and then write their accounts of what they saw and then share out.

Activities:

1. Ask class to tell an event from yesterday's history.
2. Create a brief time strip of yesterday's class events and write on smart board.
3. Students will create a list of 5 questions to interview a partner about an event in their childhood.
4. Students will interview their partner and document their answers.
5. Students will relate events from last year. Once all students seem to understand the meaning of "the past," ask for a few students to tell an event from when they were babies. Do they remember these events? If not, how do they know about them?
6. Students will find someone who was around during the Civil Rights era or during any significant Modern Day event, i.e. presidential inauguration)
7. Students will have to use online sites provided to learn more about obtaining oral history.
8. Interview questions should be created and typed
9. All interviews have to be recorded using an iPod.
10. Each interview must contain an intro that includes background information and music from that era of time.

Assessment:

1. Presentation of Oral History Project via ipad
2. Written reflections documenting entire experience
3. Typed Interview Questions

Teacher Notes:

- Additional questions to promote thinking / class discussion:
 1. History deals with people, places, or events of the past. Have you asked yourself or others: “Why must I study the past?” or “Why must I study history?”
 2. Or, have you asked yourself these questions, “What makes a person, place, or event of the past significant? How am I connected to the past? Who am I?”
- Additional Oral History Links for Students

American Association for State and Local History
1717 Church Street
Nashville, TN 37203-2991
www.aaslh.org/publicat.htm

American Folklife Center
Library of Congress
101 Independence Ave., SE Washington, DC 20540
lcweb.loc.gov/folklife/

American Folklore Society
4350N. Fairfax Drive
Suite 640
Arlington, VA 22203
afsnet.org/index.html

Name: _____

Oral History Study Sheet

1. Observation

A. Study the photograph/video for 5 minutes. Form an overall impression of the photograph and then examine individual items. Next, divide the photo into quadrants or start and stop video to study each section to see what new details become visible.

B. Use the categories below to list people, objects, and activities in the photograph/video.

People-

Objects-

Activities-

Step 2. Inference

Based on what you have observed above, list three things you might infer from this photograph.

Step 3. Questions

A. What questions does this photograph raise in your mind?

B. Where could you find answers to them?

Versions of History Chart

Name: _____

Name: Event: Date: I interviewed _____
and _____

In both stories:

Not everything was the same in both stories. Sometimes one person remembered something that the other forgot, or the two people remembered something differently. Here are some examples of these differences:

1) In _____ story, _____
_____, but in _____ story,

_____.

2) In _____ story, _____
_____, but in _____ story,

_____.

3) In _____ story, _____
_____, but in _____
story, _____